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## Book Notices

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### STUDIEN ZUR BABYLONISCHEN RELIGION

Dr. Frank<sup>1</sup> has followed up his two smaller monographs on certain aspects of Babylonian-Assyrian symbolism as expressed in art works, by a larger volume of *Studies* on the Babylonian religion. According to the title-page the volume consists of two *Hefte*. The first *Heft* covers 38 pages and is devoted to a discussion of the divisions of the Babylonian priesthood and the priestly functions; the second *Heft* treats of sacred animals and the animal cult, in 27 pages. The balance of the book, or over 200 pages, is taken up with notes, translations of selected texts, appendices, and what the Germans would call "Excuse." To the first *Heft* of 38 pages there are no less than 338 notes, covering 56 pages; to the second *Heft* there are 101 notes of 19 pages. The notes thus cover more space than the texts, and one wonders whether the author would not have done better to combine his notes into a continuous discussion and to have given in the form of notes what is now the text. Certainly the first note, covering no less than five pages, discussing the title of PATESI, belongs as much to the text as any part of the book. The translated texts with notes cover 84 pages, or almost one-third of the entire book. Here the notes are on the whole of the proper character—brief elucidations of words and phrases occurring in the texts themselves, though, as one shall see, the necessity of again translating and commenting upon texts that are perfectly well known and that have already been treated by others may be questioned. The appendices on the Sumerian temple, on the Elamitic temple, on Temple Libraries, on the expression E-DUB, and on musical instruments cover 56 pages, or almost as much as the two *Hefte* which are supposed to represent the body of the work. In fact, what the author offers is not in any but a technical sense a book, but rather *disjecta membra*, embodying a variety of topics on which he has evidently been at work for some time, but which he has not taken the trouble to piece together in some consecutive order.

The result of Frank's method is that a very large variety of matters are touched upon, many valuable notes and suggestions are scattered throughout the volume, but scarcely any topic introduced is treated exhaustively or systematically, so that when one finishes the volume, one has learned much or little according to one's previous state. The difficulty of utilizing

<sup>1</sup>STUDIEN ZUR BABYLONISCHEN RELIGION. By Carl Frank. (Erster Band. 1. u. 2. Heft.) Strassburg: Schlesier und Schweißhardt. M. 20. 287 pp. 2 vols.

what the author has put together is still further increased by the totally insufficient index covering less than seven pages.

Coming to the body of the volume, it is not a pleasant task for the reviewer to give expression to his disappointment in finding that the author has really furnished little that is new. In justice to Dr. Frank it should be stated that he confesses in his preface to having embodied in his work material already known for some time, but he adds that it has been presented in a "new form." That is certainly not the case with the texts covering as we have seen, almost one-third of the volume. He furnishes in all twelve specimens in transliteration and translation. Of these the first three are merely fragments of hymns of a few lines each, which, except for the fact that in each the *ka lu*-priest is introduced, have no special connection with *Heft 1*, and might just as well have been briefly referred to in one of the notes. Translations of isolated passages can hardly be designated as the presentation of older material in a "new form." Then follow four brief letters from Harper's collection (*Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*), but one is surprised to find in connection with the first specimen that no attempt is made to translate the greater part of the obverse and reverse, nor to interpret the letter as a whole. The really difficult terms and passages in this and the other letters are passed over. One of the letters is not even translated but merely transliterated; of another the author gives a "tentative" translation, and adds that it contains nothing of special importance for his purpose beyond the mention of *nâr u*—the term for a priestly class of "singers." In the translation itself he fails to see that the triple *lû* is to be rendered "whether. . . whether. . . or," and that the following phrase must mean "the men of his land whose gods gave to me the kingship thereof" and not that the people gave the writer their land, their gods, and their kingship (as Frank puts it); nor is the balance of the letter as translated by our author at all intelligible. The seventh text included in this "Excursus" is the new *Etana* fragment, discovered and published by the reviewer in *JAOS* about a year ago. Frank not only translates it anew, but transliterates it and adds a commentary, taking up 14 pages in this way; and he even reproduces the text again. Such a repetition is only justified in case a new interpretation is offered, but any reader who will go to the trouble of comparing his translation with mine will find agreement in all but a few minor points. The same applies to the text which deviates from the one published in the *JAOS* in the reading of a few doubtful signs. The interpretation proposed by Frank is precisely the same as that given by the reviewer. He places the fragment in the tale exactly where the reviewer put it; he refers to the Scheil fragment and uses it precisely as the reviewer did; and merely because he succeeds in improving my version in half a dozen minor places, or rather in suggesting improvements, he regards himself justified in pronouncing my edition as "vollständig verfehlt." Still more remarkable is the author's conduct when he comes to translate another text dealing with liver divination (pp. 165-78), where

he does not even mention that the text was for the first time copied in full, translated, and explained by the reviewer in his *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, II, 335-40. From the notes it is evident that Frank made use of this work on the text, since he refers in most cases, to the same passages in liver-divination texts which are put together in my notes; and besides, on comparing the two translations it will again be found that they differ from one another merely in the choice of words. The note on p. 175 to line 26 is merely a transcript in transformed form of note 6 on p. 377 of the reviewer's *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*. More than this, although he uses the reviewer's investigations of the divination literature of the Babylonians and Assyrians at every turn, he never refers to them and directly misleads the reader who does not happen to be an Assyriologist by conveying the impression that the few pages in Ungnad's popular article of some 30 pages on the "Deutung der Zukunft bei den Babyloniern und Assyriern" is the only discussion of divination through the liver as practiced by Babylonians and Assyrians. Dr. Frank would have been perfectly justified in opposing any of the views or results reached by the reviewer, but I submit that he has no right to conceal from his readers the fact that in the reviewer's work above mentioned, over 200 pages (II, 213-415) are devoted to this subject in which dozens of "liver" texts are translated for the first time, and in which for the first time the system is set forth in detail and its position in the religion made clear.

Another text translated by our author (pp. 128-39) is the well-known fragment in which the bârû-priesthood is carried back to a perhaps legendary king of Sippar EN-ME-DURANKI and in which the various functions of the bârû and the conditions of admission to the dignity are set forth. We owe this important text to Professor Zimmern, who published, translated, and explained it a good many years ago in his *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der babylonischen Religion*. I cannot, in comparing his translation with Zimmern's, see that our author has improved upon his predecessor in the few passages in which he deviates from Zimmern's version. Instead of Zimmern's suggestion for takaltu as "Ledertasche," Frank proposes "Eingeweide" and, in a note on the subject, tries to show that it refers primarily to the "stomach." This, however, is impossible since CT, XIV, Pl. 14, 3, enters takaltu as a synonym for hašû, which is one of the words for "liver." The term takaltu must therefore include this organ; and since, as Zimmern had already recognized, takaltu means literally a "receptacle," it appears to be used for the "net" in which the liver is inclosed. At all events it cannot designate the "entrails," for we have no proof that any other organ besides the liver was used in Babylonian divination, but it must be a technical term to describe the official hepatoscopy, just as the expression niširti Anim Enlil u Ea "Secret (or Mystery) of Anu, Enlil and Ea" designates astrology as another form of divination intrusted to the bârû-priesthood. Frank fails to recognize also the force of this latter expression; and it is

rather surprising that in his new study of Zimmern's text, he should not have seen that lines 16-18, which on the surface are a repetition of lines 7-9, revert to a different source and that the text as it now stands is a combination of several independent bits of separate origin; for which view other evidence can be brought forward.

Nos. X and XI of the texts selected by Frank for translation belong to the class of birth omens, but our author did not recognize that the former (K 4035, etc.) stands in the relation to the latter as a part of a complete tablet to an extract from the same—lines 1-23 of K 4035, etc. (*CT*, XXVIII, Pl. 5.), corresponding to lines 31-39 obv. of K 2007 (*CT*, XXVII, Pl. 17). The two texts should therefore have been combined. Both are parts of the third tablet of the Isbu-series=K 131, published in *CT*, XXVII, Pl. 16. The obverse of K 131=lines 1-12 of obv. of K 2007, while the reverse=lines 2-5 of rev. of K 2007. It so happens that the portion of this third tablet furnished by the fragment K 4035, etc., is not preserved in the fragment of the full tablet represented by K 131. Moreover, K 2007 (being Text No. XI of Frank's selection) is composed of extracts of *two different tablets*, the obverse to line 5 of the reverse being 45 omens taken, as indicated, from the third tablet of the Isbu-series, while rev. 7-26 is an extract of 17 omens from the fourth tablet of this series as is shown by a comparison of the colophon to K 2007 (rev. 28) with the colophon to K 131 rev. 10, furnishing the first line of this fourth tablet. That K 2007 contains two extracts is indicated by the two colophons rev. 7 and 28—in both of which we find the phrase *ištu libbi . . . na-as-ḥa* which rev. 28 is ideographically written ZI-(ḥa). The same relationship of "extracts" to portions of the "full" tablet applies to many other fragments of the texts published in *CT*, XXVII and XXVIII, but unless this is recognized one cannot hope to get a satisfactory conception of the character of these birth-omen texts. What Frank says, therefore, on p. 153 regarding the order of subjects followed in K 2007 is of no value, since this text is merely an extract; whereas, in order to get a proper view of the order, we must take K 4035, etc., and K 131—portions of the full tablet—as our basis, and supplement these by K 2007. Putting the three texts together, we can restore the greater portion of this third tablet of the Isbu-series, just as by combining K 2007 rev. 7-26—the extract from the fourth tablet—with K 6790, etc. (*CT*, XXVIII, Pl. 1-2)—the "full" fourth tablet—we can restore a large portion of the fourth tablet of this series.

If Dr. Frank had penetrated somewhat deeper into the study of the two birth-omen texts which he selected for translation, he would not have failed in the endeavor to translate the very first line of his No. X, for he would have seen that this line corresponds to K 2007 obv. 31 and that the full line can, therefore, be restored, just as lines, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17 can be restored from lines 32-39 obv. of K 2007. By a comparison with K 2007 we see that the "extract" of 8 lines is taken from the 16 lines of the "full" tablet

(K 4035), or in other words that the "extract" represents in this section at least about one-half of the full tablet. The comparison of K 4035, line 1, with K 2007, obv. 31, furthermore shows that the term *kar-ši* following the number 6 corresponds to 6 *ta-a-an* of K 2007 which clears up the meaning of *karšu*—left untranslated by Frank. It designates the "divisions" of the six toes on the right foot of the new-born babe. The line, therefore, reads, "If a woman gives birth (*sc.* to a child and it has) six divided toes on the right foot, misfortune (?) will seize the house of the man." What our author had in mind when he translated "Wenn eine Frau gebiert und es sind dann VI *Karšē* der Zehen seines (rechten [?]) Fusses gemacht. . . ." it is difficult to say; just as his translation of l. 1, of No. XI (K 2007), "Wenn eine Frau gebiert und dann Löwenohren gemacht sind," etc., gives no sense. Dr. Frank has, in fact, failed to understand the fundamental character of these birth-omen texts which deal on the one hand with all kinds of malformations and on the other with supposed resemblances between the features or organs or parts of the new-born babe with those of some animal—lion, dog, swine, or ass, etc. The proper translation of this line is, of course, "If a woman gives birth (*sc.* to a child that has) the ears of a lion," etc. The particle *ma* which our author throughout translates "dann" is simply the introduction to the peculiarity observed in the case of the infant which stamps it as an omen that calls for an interpretation. Space forbids me to show in detail other errors in Frank's translation of these two comparatively simple birth-omen texts. Our author does not even correctly interpret the term *isbu* which occurs hundreds of times in these birth-omen texts. Had he studied the passages he would have found that it does not mean "ein ungestaltiges Wesen" as he renders the term on p. 133, but is the generic expression for the child or animal, formed in the womb. The proper German term is "*Leibesfrucht*," i.e., either the embryo, the foetus, or the full-formed new birth, or a malformation according to the context.

Of the body of the work, by which I mean the two *Hefte*, the first, on the "Babylonian Priesthood," is largely a restatement with some additions and many notes of what has already been more briefly put together by Schrank in his monograph *Babylonische Sühnriten*, etc., and in some special articles by other scholars that might be mentioned. By this I do not mean to deny that there are many interesting remarks on the texts, many valuable suggestions and references to texts that are useful, but I cannot find that he has added anything materially to our knowledge of the subject. Of more value is the second *Heft* treating of sacred animals and animal symbolism in the cult, though he has failed to utilize the very valuable material to be found in the designs on the "Seal Cylinders" and which is now so conveniently and so admirably put together by Ward in his *Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*; and he has also neglected the animal omens and the birth omens which may be designated as fundamental to a study of the animals that acquire a religious significance in Babylonia and Assyria. The birth

omens, which deal as much with signs observed on the young of animals as with those on human infants, form the starting-point for the cult of animals so far as it existed in the Babylonian-Assyrian religion. How very fragmentary Frank's treatment of the subject is may be gathered from the three lines he devotes to the eagle without even mentioning the eagle that Nin-girsu holds in his hand as his symbol on the so-called "Stéle des Vautours," or the symbolism associated with the lion-headed eagle on the silver vase of Entemana and on seal cylinders—as the standard of Lagash, confirmed by passages in Gudea's texts which show, as Ward and Thureau-Dangin have also recognized, that the bird Im-gig is none other than this symbol. The association of gods with animals which is an exceedingly important factor in the symbolism connected with sacred animals is hardly touched upon. Instead of translating texts already sufficiently understood, our author should have furnished a full study of *CT*, XVII, Pls. 42–43—a text of fundamental significance for the subject of Dr. Frank's second *Heft*. Would this not have been more useful than merely to put together from the old Babylonian votive and historical inscriptions the list of temples occurring there, with no discussion even of their names, much less of their character? Such a list is almost useless without a utilization of the rich material furnished by the business documents of the older and the later periods of Babylonian history. A thorough study of the Babylonian and Assyrian temples on the basis of the really vast material now accessible to us is a desideratum, and Dr. Frank would have rendered a genuine service had he confined himself in his volume to this one theme instead of passing from one subject to another without exhausting any and betraying a rather superficial acquaintance with most of them.

Of what special value are the four pages which he devotes to an "Exkurs" on the "Temple Library" of Nippur question and which is purely polemical without adding anything of moment to the problem? What is needed is the proof by the publication of at least some hundreds of tablets of an *unquestionably* literary character with colophons and other indications to show that the bulk of the valuable tablets found by J. H. Haynes in 1900 are not merely school texts, or the necessary paraphernalia of the temple for use in the cult. Dr. Frank admits the parallel between the discoveries at Sippar and Nippur to which the reviewer first called attention in his paper "Did the Babylonian Temples Have Libraries (*JAOS*, XXV) and which neither Rassam nor Scheil who explored Sippar designated as a temple library. In making this admission Frank really gives his case away, for if all tablets found in a temple are part of a "temple library," then the whole contention about the special character of the "Nippur" finds of 1900 falls to the ground. It is somewhat confusing to find the author in the course of his special pleading introducing at one point (p. 225) the compound ideogram E-Dub "Tablet-House" as the possible designation for a "Temple Library" and therefore a proof for the existence of such an institution, and then a few pages

farther on (p. 228) saying that "it is certain that the expression does not designate a library" but a "writing-room" or a "notary's office."

Realizing evidently the fragmentary character of what he has gathered in his volume, Dr. Frank closes his book by a promise to continue his investigations (which I earnestly hope he will do) and to "publish in an enlarged form and in another connection," as soon as the material at our disposal shall have been exhaustively studied. One should suppose that Dr. Frank would have done this before publishing his volume. He then enters upon a statement of what still remains to be done and how it should be done and closes with the *ipse dixit* that the "Religion of Babylonia" is still to be written. If our author means by this that a final work on the "Religion of Babylonia and Assyria" cannot at present be written, everyone will agree with him. In every progressive field of research one work is always the forerunner of another, but that is no reason why at each juncture in the progress of knowledge the material at our disposal should not be presented in a systematic and readable manner; and it is hardly generous to ignore, as our author does, the work done in this respect by others.

MORRIS JASTROW, JR.